Sycamore Advisory Commission
Pre-School Survey

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Sub-Committee

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Agenda

• Project Background and Objectives
• Research Methodology
• Key Findings
• Recommended Next Steps
Project Background

- Sycamore Community Schools was awarded an **Early Learning Grant**. The grant requires partnerships with pre-schools to:
  - Share Ideas
  - Provide Training
  - Provide Support
  - Help with Curriculum Development
Project Objectives

- Understand area pre-school’s interest in partnering with Sycamore Schools via the Early Learning Grant
- Assess which topic areas would be most relevant trainings for area pre-schools
  - Preschool Curriculum
  - Measuring Progress
  - Parent Communication
Research Methodology

- Interviewed Kindergarten Teachers
- Identified Area Pre-Schools & Directors
- Surveyed Area Pre-School Directors
- Followed Up For Added Clarification
- Analyzed Data

- Identify Top Opportunity Areas & Gaps
- Face-to-Face Interviews
- Survey Monkey
- E-Mail
- Delivered Books to Participants!
Top Opportunity Areas

The Transition From Pre-School to Kindergarten

As Identified By Kindergarten Teachers:

- Social - turn taking, raising hand, zipping/buttonning coat
- Academic
  - Writing workshop
  - Math - counting to 20, number sense
  - Language arts - concepts of print, read aloud, vocabulary/language
- Responsive classroom
Pre-School Survey Respondents

- 11 of 19 area pre-schools responded to the survey
- Good mix of large, medium and small size schools
- 9 of the 11 respondents had 7+ years of experience as a pre-school director
Key Findings - Do Schools Want To Partner?

YES! Area pre-schools ARE interested in partnering with Sycamore

9 of the 11 schools were “Extremely Interested” or “Very Interested” in partnering with Sycamore
Key Findings - What’s Important to Area Schools

Appropriate Curriculum and Monitoring Progress Top the List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance (1-5 scale)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step Up to Quality Stars</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program for Special Needs Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programming for Gifted Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>Separate Curriculum for 3-4 year olds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early Learning Standards</td>
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<td>Monitoring Student Progress</td>
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Step Up to Quality Accreditation was least important to the sample
Key Findings - Accreditation

Step Up To Quality

- 5-star quality rating administered by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and the Ohio Department of Education.

- Recognizes programs that meet quality benchmarks over and above minimum health and safety licensing standards, including:
  - Low child:staff ratios
  - Smaller group size
  - Higher staff education
  - Specialized training
  - Improved workplace characteristics and learning standards
Key Findings - Accreditation

Most area pre-schools are not engaged in the Step Up To Quality Accreditation

“We have taken all the education pieces of “Step Up to Quality” and done some additional workshops, but I have not wanted to burden the teachers with all the record keeping that is involved.”

- Pre-School Director
Key Findings

Preschools include most key concepts in their curriculum

Music education is the only topic not consistently included in area pre-school's curriculum.
Key Findings

Pre-schools don’t have a consistent approach to gifted and special needs children

- Over half of the respondents did not provide resources in either area.
- Of the schools that did approach gifted or special needs children, they used a variety of methods to meet the needs of these children:
  - Individual or small group classes tailored to the students needs
  - Separate materials or educational toys
  - Curriculum developed by a teacher with specialized training in this area.
Key Findings

How They Monitor Progress

- Portfolios with samples of child’s work
- Formal report cards
- Daily observation
- Check lists
- Monthly goals
- Social/emotional assessment
- Individual goals per child
- Testing
Key Findings

Parent/teacher conference are the most common method of parent communication.
Key Findings

Respondents are interested in ALL suggested training topics, with all scoring at least 4 out 5 on a 5 point scale.

Respondents also mentioned **Pre-School Safety** and **Classroom management skills/ideas** as potential topics.
There is some excitement from pre-school directors!

“I wanted to let you know that we are excited for the opportunities and communication that this council has to offer. Thank you for including us!”

- Area Preschool Director
Recommended Next Steps

- Develop the following trainings based on top areas of interest among both pre-school directors and kindergarten teachers
  - Setting & Monitoring Learning Goals
  - Preparing Pre-Schoolers Socially
  - Preparing Pre-Schoolers Academically
  - Responsive Classroom
Recommended Next Steps

- Follow-up to more deeply probe and understand training needs within each topic area
- Engage/involve pre-school directors and kindergarten teachers in the development of the trainings
- Consider Orton Gillingham training
Questions?